

ENGLISH EFFIGIES IN WOOD

NOTHING is more interesting and remarkable in the long history of art in England than the rapid and certain development of Romanesque from early rudeness to the singular beauty of the Transition. The continued advance towards the most finished architectural productions that the world has to exhibit, may be seen between the period marked off at its beginning by the west front of Wells, emphasised in the midst of its progress by the Angel Choir of Lincoln—‘in itself one of the loveliest of human works,’ and culminating in productions of the highest order at Westminster.

Not less striking than this great architectural development during two hundred fateful years is the collateral progress of sculpture, both of an architectural and of a monumental kind. Difficult, indeed, to imitate, and well-nigh impossible at the present day to create, sculptures such as the angels in the spandrels at Lincoln are as mystic and abstracted figures, perhaps as far beyond the power of modern sculptors, as we, in our own dreadful day of flippant florid vulgarity, uninspired by the same deep religious feeling, are removed from those brilliant times.

Turning to monuments, we equally find productions of a very high order. The effigies of Wulstan at Worcester, 1096; Longespee at Salisbury, 1227; Caletto at Peterborough, 1262; and De Montfort at Hughenden, 1280—are conspicuous and venerable examples in a long and unequalled collection of national memorials of the dead which have been spared to these days; mutilated, indeed, and time-smitten, but still exhibiting in their perished or dishonoured state the rise, variation, or decline of other arts besides that of sculpture.

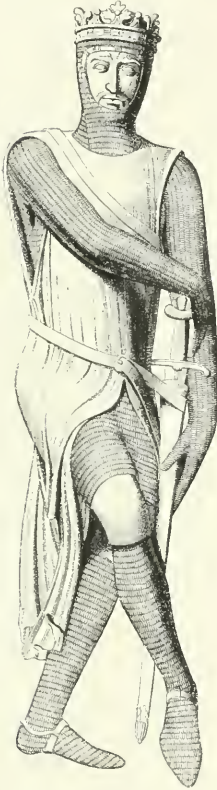
Collateral, again, with the works in stone, we have those more enduring ones in bronze; such, for instance, in the best period, as the effigies of Henry III. and Queen Eleanor, productions of which it is impossible to speak too highly, and which, like the sculptures at Wells, Lincoln, and Westminster, we may with just pride claim as the creations of a purely English school.

And while one set of men were turning their attention to architectural sculpture and its noble accessories, the representations of the human form—out of which, indeed, the monumental effigy had its rise in Western art—and schooling both hand and mind with subjects relating to the promises of the Almighty, the incarnation of the Word, the doctrine of the Atonement, the dignity of the Church, the end of the wicked, or the joys of Heaven, other grave artists exercised their talents upon oak, and fashioned out of the more pliant, but more difficult material, infinite Holy Roods and their attendant figures, full-sized statues of saints, and smaller subject-scenes and attributes of altars, resplendent with the noble metals and the arts of the painter, which formed such striking features in churches both small and great. In what profusion these technical productions had accumulated we know, alas! from the story of their destruction: are not these things written in blood and in the records of the iconoclasts? Of their precise nature and splendid decoration, we gather somewhat from the painted and gilded roofs and screens



WILLIAM LONGESPEE, EARL OF SALISBURY. From effigy by C. A. Stophard. (See p. 186.)

of a late period which have survived; of earlier times, the monumental effigies, both of stone and of wood, tell us most, for the artistic treatment was the same in both cases. But while the axes and hammers spared not the architectural sculptures in stone, the destruction on this score has been almost little compared with the demolition of art in wood. Truly enough the image-breakers must have said to themselves, 'They have no knowledge that set up the wood of their graven image,' for they flinched not in their wickedness. Carvings in stone, whether as effigies or as small figures under canopied 'hovels,' could be defaced and so left, crosses and altar-tombs dislocated, 'slighted,' or cast down, but the



ROBERT, DUKE OF NORMANDY. From an etching by C. A. Stothard. (See p. 180.)

wooden statue bore in its nature the principle of its destruction—the fire devoured it. Of the once countless quantity of figures from the Rood, the ancient examples now existing in England can be told on the fingers of one hand; two of the number are principal statues, and one of them, that at Cartmel Fell, was rescued in 1875, having been used as a poker for the vestry fire—'a brand plucked out of the burning.'

The 'monuments of superstition' of this class—of whose rare art value we can gather some notion from those that remain in Italy—having been thus wiped out in England, we have, in any general notes upon English effigies in wood, to turn to the monumental figures of stone as well as of wood, as we shall see later on, for an insight into their artistic treatment. Under the circumstances touched upon above, a feeling of astonishment at once arises at finding that, comparatively speaking, so many have escaped 'the swift illapse of accident disastrous.' And it fortunately happens that this happy salvation has been extended to such a number that it would be possible, but neither necessary or convenient on the present occasion, to track the progress of English effigies in wood step by step from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century, though the total list throughout England is under a hundred.

A few words should now be said upon the usual treatment of monumental effigies in mediæval times. Speaking generally, the material commonly employed for the best works up to the end of the third quarter of the thirteenth century was Purbeck and Sussex marble, both secondary fresh-water limestones, and, later on, Forest marble, an oolitic shelly rock. Many early examples were simply finished with a polish, but the greater number soon came to be painted to an exact representation of the man (for women were not often awarded effigies at the time which we are considering), whether king, high ecclesiastic, or civilian of position; the effigy, carved at first on the coffin's actual lid, becoming gradually raised upon the altar-tomb—in early days without, and from the last quarter of the thirteenth century onwards with, a canopy or a wooden tester or testoon over it. The deceased was thus shown 'in his habits as he lived,' and, the body having been cased and apparelled, as he was 'leaded' and 'chested' and lay in his coffin. At still later times, towards the end of the fourteenth century, it became the practice to bear a hastily made 'lively effigy' of the dead man 'in his very robes of estate' in the funeral procession, and, finally, the obsequies being finished, to place it temporarily in the church, under or associated with its 'herse,' where it became a source of great attraction to the vulgar, supplying the place of the permanent effigy until that was set up.

The 'lively' figures did away with the exposure of the actual dead body at the

funeral, a practice which was attended with much inconvenience. They were closely allied to wooden effigies proper, and were probably first suggested by them, inasmuch as their foundation was a more or less rude wooden block, like a great jointed doll; they were padded and made up to a proper form, just as monstrous figures are constructed in the *opera* of a theatre for pantomimes at the present day. The face and hands alone were treated with wax or fine plaster, laid over the roughly carved blocks and fashioned and tinted to the life, and these figures being dressed in great array with tinsel crowns, coronets, and further insignia of greatness, must have presented a very imposing effect. As time went on, so many of them standing with their 'hereses' in different parts of a church, like that of Westminster, must have added greatly both to its picturesqueness and interest, possibly not always conducing to reverence. Figures from these sources in different stages of dilapidation—not less interesting on that account—from the rude wooden effigies of Plantagenet times to the beginning of the present century, still remain in the Abbey, remnants of the once popular 'Waxworks,' under the name of the 'Ragged Regiment.'

By a venerable scrap in the Close Rolls of 33 Henry III. (1249), we learn that the king orders three oaks to be taken from his park at Periton, and three images made from them, and placed as his gift in Glastonbury church. We have an early and direct instance of the employment of wood for a statue to decorate a tomb in the Chancellor's Roll of 56 Henry III. (1222), a wooden figure covered with silver-gilt plates being furnished for the tomb of the Princess Catherine, daughter of Henry III., and who died in 1257. From the size and character of the monument, with its top originally inlaid with mosaic, this could not have been a recumbent effigy, but was perhaps a figure of St. Catherine. It gives us an example of a wooden figure or foundation covered with metal plates, ornamental and jewelled, such as were presented to shrines and altars.

The effigy of William de Valence, died 1296, is a great advance and brings us to the monumental effigy proper. This is a full-sized wooden figure covered with a number of plates of copper, some of them enamelled, no doubt from Limoges and the work of John of that place, who, about 1276, furnished a tomb, which has now vanished, for Walter de Merton, bishop of Rochester. We know that many enamelled tombs and effigies were sent from Limoges, but no other example has survived to our time in England. In the Louvre is the wooden effigy of Blanche de Champagne, died 1283; it is covered with plates of copper, the head resting upon an enamelled pillow of Limoges work. From the nature of its construction the art displayed in the Valence statue is not of high order. The repoussé work is coarse and the human form rudely expressed. The junctions of the sheets of copper are covered in a makeshift sort of way by strips of filagree work, the mail of the hauberk and chausses being lightly engraved throughout in 'banded mail,' long the 'crux' *par excellence* of antiquaries. The delicate examples of enamelling, that fortunately still remain, exhibit technical efforts of high quality, and point to a system of decoration that was carried, as we shall see later on, still further with painting and gilding, both on stone and wooden effigies. The surcote of De Valence has been made of enamelled scutcheons, and the great enamelled shield, worn on the hip after the French fashion,



WILLIAM DE VALENCE, BISHOP
OF PEMBRIDGE, 1296.
E. 13 C. 13.

settles the *provenance* of the monument. The whole of this memorial is now but a shadow of its original and almost barbaric splendour, and the wooden chest, or upper tomb upon which it lies, has been quite denuded of the plates which once covered it. An earlier example of a wooden tomb, but sustaining a stone figure, is that of Longespee at Salisbury, 1227. Similarly, the effigy of Henry V. is a wooden figure once covered with 'fine embroidered and gilded plates of brass,' a recurrence to an ancient practice; the silver head was carried off at the Dissolution, stolen away, as Sir Roger de Coverley aptly said in 1711, by 'some Whig, I'll warrant you.' It will be remembered that Pepys,



SIR ROBERT DU BOIS.
From an etching by C. A. Stothard.



SIR WALTER TREYLLI AND HIS WIFE.
From a drawing by A. Hartthorne.

in 1668-9, after viewing the effigy of the victor of Agincourt, lifted up the exposed body of Catherine of Valois in her coffin, and 'I did kiss her mouth, reflecting upon it that I did kiss a Queen and that this was my birthday.' Later still, Henry VII. by his will directed that an 'ymage of tymber' of a king, covered with plates of fine gold, in the manner of an armed man, representing himself, be made and set up on the crest of the shrine of the Confessor.

The wooden effigy proper soon followed—if, indeed, it did not altogether precede the plated block. An early example is that said to be to the memory of a pathetic character in history, the forlorn captive Robert, duke of Normandy. This is a doubtful attribution which need not be discussed here; it is sufficient for our purpose to recognise in this effigy a memorial of high interest which can hardly be later than 1240—the earliest wooden effigy in England. It appears to be solid, and was repainted in the time of Charles II.,

when the coronet was doubtless added. The hauberk has a continuous hood, and the details of the figure indicate its early character; but the thickness of the modern paint makes it impossible to say by what method the mail is represented.

At Fersfield, in Norfolk, is the wooden effigy of Sir Robert du Bois, died 1311. Blomefield, the historian, who was rector of the church in the early part of the last century, has recorded that he found the figure hollowed out and filled with burnt coal as a preservative against damp, and part of the original decoration perfect, the cushions being flowered with silver on red, and gold on green, other embellishments being 'gilded on a Cement and let into the Wood in several Places, on his Belt, Sword, and Spurs, and then covered with Glass, but most were defaced.' Unhappily, Blomefield finding the figure very dirty 'had it washed very clean,' and caused the whole to be repainted. The importance of these ancient decorative items will be apparent later on.

The effigies of Sir Walter Treylli and his wife at Woodford, Northamptonshire, about 1316, are excellent examples of wooden figures, but they have gone through the process which one commonly sees maliciously applied to the inside walls of old churches—they have been denuded. It is to be observed how much care the sculptor took, and how conscientiously he finished his work which was immediately to be coated over and painted. The reason of the failure of the painting upon wooden effigies was the constant changes of temperature, causing contraction and expansion of the wood, and the consequent breaking up or 'fretting' of the surface upon which the colouring was laid; following this came the eighteenth-century craze for periodically beautifying the churches *à la* churchwarden, and the scrubbing down of effigies with soap and water. Such of them as have escaped the subsequent paint-brush of the village carpenter, or the daubing of the whitewasher, still show us in the deep folds and corners minute evidences of their original state. The outer robe of Alianora Dame Treylli furnishes a considerable portion of a diapered pattern in two shades of red, with centres of white swans and 'wrythen' foliations, the general scheme being precisely like that in the enamels on the pillow of William de Valence.

The difficulty of adequately representing in Purbeck, Sussex, or Forest marble the delicate details of costume, and the increased demand for monuments of this nature, brought about the employment of various stones that surrendered with greater readiness to the chisel, and the consequent establishment of local centres, or schools of sculpture. To these stones a surface material was applied, which could be artistically treated; it had long been employed in altar and other minor decorations, and art of mediæval times—not to mention that of far earlier periods in the world's history—owes much to its use. This substance was *gesso*, a composition that could be laid on, impressed with a matrix, or treated with a tool, and became and remained, in the absence of damp, as hard as the stone itself. Upon these orthodox relieved or broken surfaces, gilding, silvering, or painting could be applied, and with a brilliant result unattainable in any other way. Countless stone figures show vestiges of this treatment, and we find exactly the same handling, as we shall briefly point out, on the surfaces of English effigies in wood, with certain additional items of manipulation which the yielding, faulty, or stubborn nature of the material necessitated.

The sculptor of a full-sized wooden effigy, let us say in the early years of the fourteenth century, had many difficulties to contend with. In the first place he must find a block of well-seasoned oak, sound at the heart, and at least two feet across. This width would be necessary whether he represented a knight 'in the posture of prayer,' drawing or sheathing his sword, or a lady 'fair and gent,' with mantle or surcote gathered up, or 'hands in resignation pressed.' It was necessary that the wood be carefully chosen and sound at the heart, because the fashioning of the *table* of the monument and important parts of the figure would have to come out of that portion of the block, and also because—in order to prevent splitting—the body, as far as it was absorbed into the table or bed upon which

it would lie, must be hollowed out at the back. This was the invariable practice, and any failing in the nature of the oak would, after this scooping process, soon make itself apparent. It was usually extended to the cushions under the head, justly varying in their contours and arrangement with the period to which the effigy belonged, as well as to the body of the animal, the *cagnon* of French romance, at the feet.

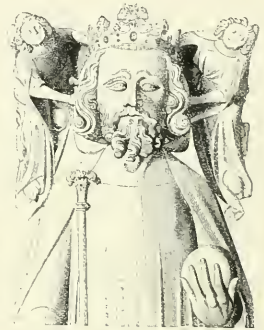
The effigy having been carved, the question may naturally present itself, What had the sculptor to guide him in making his 'vera effigies?' The answer in the generality of cases is—nothing; the effigy was that of a knight *quelconque*. No doubt in the instances of royal personages or individuals of distinction, the 'pictor insolid' expressed the general character of the person represented as faithfully as the art of the time would allow, but it was not so usually in the thirteenth century, and in process of time became less and less so. Thus, the face of Henry III., with its triple frown and wrinkled brow, agrees with the king's



HENRY III.
From an etching by C. A. Stothard.



RICHARD BEAUCHAMP, EARL OF WARWICK.
From an etching by C. A. Stothard.



EDWARD II.
From an etching by C. A. Stothard.

countenance on his great seals as it varies from youth to age; and, similarly, the representation of Richard Beauchamp, in his brazen effigy at Warwick, with his deeply furrowed and marked features, cannot possibly be the imaginary creation of the lattener. Each of these faces bears the impress of the life of anxiety or feverish activity which we know was respectively led. And we have on the one hand the vivid testimony of the records indicating what pains must have been taken by Torel—whom we rejoice to claim as an Englishman—in modelling the statue of the king, and on the other the evidence of the Agreement, showing that Beauchamp's effigy was made according to patterns. The face of the thirteenth-century king and that of the father-in-law of the fifteenth-century 'king-maker' must therefore both be accepted as portraits. Again, Isabel Beauchamp, countess of Warwick, who died in 1439, widow of Richard Beauchamp, after disposing of her wardrobe for the use of the saints, leaves that strange order in her will that her statue shall be made all naked, with her hair cast backward, according to the design and model that Thomas Porchalion had for that purpose. Some persons are apt to think that the countenance of Edward II., in his effigy at Gloucester, was copied from a cast taken from the royal face after the 'agonising' death. This seems highly improbable. It will be remembered that Cennini, who completed his work on Painting in 1437, gives directions for taking casts from life.

ALBERT HARTSHORNE.

(To be continued.)

going periodicals for which the public can pay a yearly subscription in advance, with the prospect of seeing at any rate half the value of its money, are principally controlled by graduates. No doubt they sometimes preserve a certain appearance of youthful vigour by worshipping undergraduate talent, and using the word 'Donnish' as often and as contemptuously as possible.

Nevertheless, there appear from time to time various ephemeral and meteoric publications, edited by junior members of the University. They waste the editor's valuable time, no doubt; and yet he is learning a lesson which may, perhaps, be useful to him in after-life; for it is said that until he is undeceived by hard experience, every man is born with the conviction that he can do three things—drive a dog-cart, sail a boat, and edit a paper.

A. D. GODLEY.

ENGLISH EFFIGIES IN WOOD

II

TO every period of mediæval art belongs a certain amount of conventionalism, which is, indeed, often the very soul of the subject represented. Mediæval sculptors never forgot—or was it inherent in their nature to recognise?—that the *gisant* should be in accord with the art of the tomb upon which it lay, and of the canopy which sheltered it. This caused the sympathetic propriety which adds so much to the harmony and charm of tombs of former times. But the principle, so to speak, hardened, as architecture became more



HEAD OF BLACK PRINCE.
From an etching by C. A. Stothard.

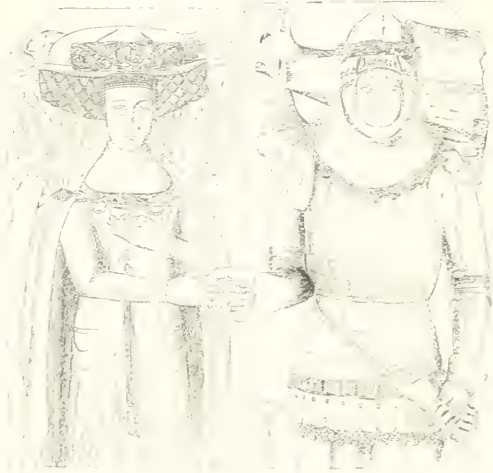


SIR GUY DE BRYAN.
From an etching by C. A. Stothard.

constrained and rigid, and—speaking, of course, of Gothic days—ended by setting aside, save in a few special cases, any idea of individual likeness in the memorials of the persons represented. Effigies, in fact, of all periods can be pointed out unlike any human creatures that ever existed, even in that vague era, which seems to be stereotyped on the tongue of man and to have preceded every age—'the good old times.' The bulk of monumental effigies supply us certainly with most valuable information, but it may not be assumed that they provide a national portrait gallery, that they are absolute copies of personal armour or costume, or that we may gather from them more than they were ever intended to give. Even in the case of the Black Prince, he merely directs in his will 'that an image in relieved work of laton gilt shall be placed in memory of us all armed in steel for battle;' he did not so order it, but the face of the effigy no doubt is a portrait. An 'image counterfeit a un Esquier en Armes en toutz pointz,' and another 'countrefait à une dame gisant en sa surcote overte,' is all the instruction that Thomas Prentys and Robert Sutton of Chellaston had given to them in the agreement for making, in 1419, the still-existing alabaster effigies, neither of which are portraits, of Ralph Greene and his wife at Lowick,

Northamptonshire; and Sir Thomas Burgh only desires by his will in 1495 that his tomb should have two figures thereon of himself and his wife, his own effigy to be clad in the mantle of the Garter.

To what extent and with how much conventionality the old English sculptors copied real armour during a period of three hundred years, we may gather from a comparison of a number of measured drawings of effigies, both of wood and stone, of a fixed period. That many of them should thus appear as replicas—with such slight differences as the chance direction of a relative of the dead man, or even, in later times, the fancy of the sculptor may have suggested—would alone be proof that the picturesque rattling harness was reproduced on the effigies only up to a certain point; we have, for the early period, to supplement the information by the evidence of illuminated MSS., and for the later by the still-existing armour itself, with its delicate fan-ribs and flutes, so justly cherished by collectors.



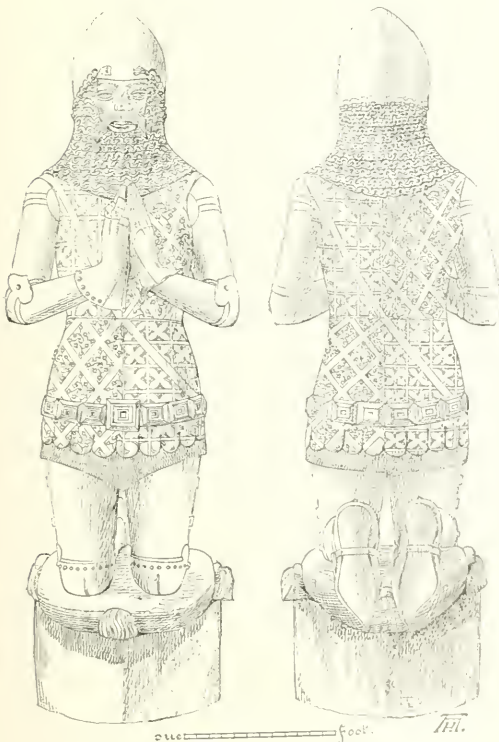
RALPH GREENE AND WIFE.
From a drawing by A. Hartshorn.

Alabaster seems to have come into use at the end of the first quarter of the fourteenth

century with the beautiful memorials of that time; its employment lasted exactly three hundred years, over-running the wooden effigies and ending with monstrous painted, stained, and blotched presentments of humanity when Stone and his sons came to the rescue with their marble figures.

Alabaster was worked at Hartshorn, Chellaston, Burton, Fauld, and Tutbury. It was so easy to manipulate that the details, such as mail and ornament, accustomed to be done in relief in gesso, were sculptured, but in coarser style and usually gilt. Thus, from the end of the fourteenth century the delicate gesso-work on effigies, save on the few then produced in wood, gradually died away. Late and highly important examples of the ancient art, applied to stone, are shown on the rare kneeling figure of Sir Edward Despencer, 1375, and the recumbent effigy of Sir Guy de Bryan, 1372, both Knights of the Garter, in the solemn church of Tewkesbury.

To return to the wooden effigies. The sculptor having done his work, and fastened with wooden pins such parts as lay outside



SIR EDWARD DESPENCER.
From a drawing by A. Hartshorn.

the compass of his block, the decorator took the effigy in hand. Having sized the figure as far as was necessary, he glued pieces of linen over the open cracks and knots to bridge over the inequalities. He then gave the statue a thin coat of gesso—that is to say, a mixture of parchment-size and whitening, with a view to subsequent painting—and he applied a



SIR HUGH BARDOLPH. Drawn by T. Kerrich.

thicker coating of gesso to those portions of the effigy which he intended to decorate in relief, such as mail, or large surfaces to be afterwards gilded or silvered, and which he desired, as the mediaeval artists always did, to break up by slightly raised work in order to supply value and ornamental importance to the gold or silver.



SIR STEPHEN DE HACCOMBE.
Drawn by R. Stothard.

The gesso he impressed before it hardened with matrices or stamps of various patterns, mail of different sizes being among them, certain *liney* marks showing the removal of the mould on the large spaces to be covered, as the operator proceeded with his work. As to the surfaces to be gilded, there were many processes. They were usually first treated with bole Armenian, to give depth and richness to the gold leaf, which was much thicker than that of the present day—often, in early times, beaten out of gleaming bezants from the East—and, as well as the silver, applied with white of egg, left dead, or burnished with an agate, the *dent de loup* of the Frenchman. This treatment has partly survived with bookbinders of the present day. Most of the processes were fully exemplified on the wooden effigy of Sir Hugh Bardolph at Banham, Norfolk, who took part in the siege of Carlaverock—‘riches homs preus e courtois’—and died in 1303. The figure is accurately illustrated and described by Mr. Kerrich in Gough’s ‘Sepulchral Monuments,’ Vol. I., Part I., p. 38. It is now painted and sanded to represent stone! Occasionally fine patterns were worked with a brush in slight relief on sunk panels, imitating enamels, on the gilded or silvered surfaces of the sword-belts and other details, as in the Fersfield examples, or decorations introduced of punctured or painted designs of the greatest variety and beauty, many of the early ones being clearly inspired by oriental fabrics, the results of the Crusades. Exactly the same processes obtained in the stone effigies. With regard to the mail, which we have seen was represented by gesso, in relief, it was coloured black, brown, yellow, red, or blue; frequently, in the early period, the links were painted on a flat surface, as at Banham, and at the end of the

fourteenth century often gilt. A remarkable stone effigy at Hacombe, Devonshire, of Sir Stephen de Hacombe, presents the rare feature of a flowing pattern in black, running over the gilt gesso mail hauberk, hood, and chausses. The decorations on the stone effigy of John de Sheppy, bishop of Rochester, died 1360, are notable examples of work of the kind to which allusion has been made, as are also those of a later time on the stone reredos in the Lady Chapel at Gloucester, and on the wooden screen at Southwold. The



HENRY OF BLOIS, BISHOP OF ROCHESTER, IN ROCHESTER CATHEDRAL.

whole of the painting upon wooden effigies was, of course, done in distemper—*tempera*; it was finally covered with a coat of plain or tinted oleaginous varnish, a very necessary but not sufficient protection.

Such was the general handling of English effigies in wood, and inasmuch as it differs in no important particular, save in so far as the treatment of the surface worked upon was concerned, from that applied to stone, it follows that the one class of monuments cannot, in any general notes upon them, be dissociated from the other. The process was also pushed to a minute and delicate degree in the decorations of attributes of altars, caskets and other small objects of domestic use, with varying manipulations and dexterity too numerous to detail here. By a careful examination of the slight vestiges which remain upon wooden effigies, as well as a study of the fuller and similar ruins that exist on stone figures, the entire mediaeval treatment of such memorials may be called up from the dim and fading past and again stand clearly revealed. A few more examples will suffice to tell and illustrate the story to its end.

The effigy at Alderton, Northamptonshire, of William de Combermartyn, died 1318, takes us a step further both in time and development of decay. It is accurately carved in oak in an attitude of great repose; and though it has lost every particle of colour, in its looped and windowed raggedness it yet exhibits much that arrests the attention. The straight under-eyelid, that favourite fashion of mediaeval sculptors, and the loose fit of the mail, are features that are usually associated with military effigies of this, the best age; and when we compare the Alderton figure with the stone effigies of Edmund, earl of Lancaster, died 1296, and Aylmer de Valence, died 1323, both in the Abbey, and particularly with the wooden one at Abergavenny, attributed for three centuries to that bright ornament of the peerage, John de Hastings, who died in 1313—a figure now assigned, wrongly as we believe, to George de Cantelupe, died 1275, it can hardly be doubted—no one who has measured and drawn them can doubt it—that all four effigies are from the same art centre, London, perhaps from the same workshop; indeed, the fact of John de Hastings having married as his first wife Isabel, sister of Aylmer de Valence, may well account for the employment of the same sculptor. The superior character of wooden effigies of this period, and of the decoration that was applied to them, lift them above the works of the numerous local schools in stone-bearing districts; from their lightness there would have been no more difficulty in transporting a hollow wooden effigy in a packing-case to Monmouthshire than to Northamptonshire, but it must be doubted whether in either example we have anything more than the general character of the person represented. The effigy of Hastings was, according to the travelled Churchyard, writing in 1587—



WILLIAM DE COMBERMARTYN. From a drawing by A. Hartshorne.



HAWISE DE KEYNES. From a drawing by A. Hartshorne.

... removed away
By fine device of man:
And layd within a window right,
Full flat on stonie wall:
Where now he doth in open sight,
Remaine to people all.'

There it still continues. The statue of Combermartyn was banished from the church at the

restoration of 1848, and, again 'by fine device of man,' relegated to an upper stage of the tower.

The dismembered and dishonoured wooden effigy at Dodford, Northamptonshire, of Hawise



SIR L. DE PAV'ELEY AND WIFE.
From a drawing by A. Hartshorne.

de Keynes, died after 1329—mother of Sir Robert de Keynes, whose fine polished Purbeck marble effigy, showing him in 'banded mail,' is in the same church—takes us almost out of the good period, and is in other respects the penultimate step to the vestry fire. The traces of colour on gesso that remain indicate a cote-hardie of blue, and a white wimple. On the wall within the arch at the back of the tomb is a distemper picture in black and red showing two angels bearing to heaven the released soul of Hawise in a napkin, the hand of the Deity issuing out of clouds to receive it; below are shields of arms.

The effigy of Sir Lawrence de Paveley, about 1330, at Paulerspury, Northamptonshire, shows a manifest decline both in art and execution, but the rare features of military equipment presented in the fluted bascinet and the

sleeved cyclas certainly redeem it from the commonplace. The statue of the lady, his wife, has great merit; the gathered-up folds of the drapery, so usual in effigies of women of that time, has much to do with the artistic success of the figure. There is nothing to be learned as to the original decorations when these antiquities were novelties, the effigies having been whitewashed in evil times.

We have now quite quitted the works in wood of the good period, and as in the art's advancing so in its declining state, it will not be necessary to follow the subject in progressive detail to the end of its course; this was intimated at the outset, yet it will be desirable to refer briefly to a few more examples of English effigies in wood as stones to step on down the stream of time.

The remarkably proportioned figure of Sir Thomas le Latymer at Braybrooke, Northamptonshire, who died in 1334, is curious as possibly the work of a local Phidias; it might have formed the text of an interesting question as to the capacity of village effigy carvers and decorators in the fourteenth century. The painting has unfortunately vanished, but the gnarled and knotty oak indicates how much preparation must have been necessary upon this intractable subject before the decorator could do his work and make the best of so ill-shaped a figure.

Michael de la Pole, earl of Suffolk, died 1415, and his wife 'lie tumulate full worshipfull' in Wingfield Church, Suffolk. The effigies are sculptured with great precision, and are capital examples of the armour and costume of the time of Henry V.; the accurate forms of the earl's harness 'give dreadful note of preparation,' and both figures show, if not exactly the genius of the artist, at least his infinite capacity for taking pains, which is not far removed from the divine quality. It is sad to relate that a little more than a hundred years ago these figures, originally resplendent with gilding and colours, were covered with a thick coat of paint.



SIR THOMAS LE LATYMER.
From a drawing by A. Hartshorne.

The effigies of Ralph Nevill, second Earl of Westmorland, died 1484, and his wife Elizabeth, widow of Lord Clifford and daughter of Hotspur, in Brancepeth Church, Durham, are notable figures in wood; no colours seem to be now visible, but the remarkable anachronisms in the armour of the man, such as a vizored salade and a collar of the rose *en soleil*—‘this sun of York’—with a pendant badge, the white boar of Richard III., worn with a jupon and armour of a hundred years before, seem to imply either that Nevill chose to use inherited harness or that a country sculptor copied some ‘bruised arms hung up for monuments.’ Leland, whose memory all antiquaries esteem, tells us in his ‘Laborious Journey and Serche’ that ‘this Neville lakkid heires male, wherapoan great concertation rose betwixt the next heire male and one of the Gascoynes.’ This opens out a tempting historical vista which may not be entered upon now.

A few examples of wooden tombs bearing wooden effigies have survived. Such is the fourteenth-century example at Pitchford, Salop. Conspicuous among this small class is the striking oak monument at Thornhill, Yorkshire, sustaining the statues of Sir John Savile and his two wives—Alice Vernon and Elizabeth Paston. On the verge of the tomb is the following inscription:—‘BONYS EMONG STONYS LYS HERE FUL STYL QWYLSTE



MICHAEL DE LA POLE AND WIFE.
F. m. C. A. St. Michael.



RALPH NEVILL.
Etched by T. J. Smith, f. m. a
drawing by C. A. St. Michael.

THE SAWLE WANDERIS WERE THAT GOD WYL IN ANNO DM MILLIMO QUINGENTISSIMO VIGESIMO NONO.’ Another is that of Henry Nevill, fifth Earl of Westmorland, died 1564, and his two wives, at Staindrop, Durham; this has been richly painted and gilded. A final step brings us to the wooden effigy—*wooden* in every sense of the word—of John Heath, died 1590, in St. Giles’s, Durham. It suffered the final indignity of ‘restoration’—restoration of an effigy!—half a century ago, and appears to be the latest monument of the kind that has been noticed.

We have thus pursued to its end, in the intermittent way necessitated by the nature of the subject, the story of English Effigies in Wood, and surely no other branch of art so widely spread presents as dismal a record of neglect and destruction. Yet, out of the dire havoc a remnant has been spared, as we have seen, for which we must be thankful, because we can retrieve from it the methods of more arts than one which were practised in England during the space of four centuries. Imagination, indeed, might recreate from the fast-perishing fragments many a memorial once shapely and brilliant with the honest artistic touch and bright fancy of men who were untrammelled by greed of gain, and the exigencies of commercial ‘culture,’ in times, in this regard at least, both good and old.

It will be readily imagined that during the progress of these observations the thoughts have often wandered away to other and notable examples of wooden statues—the Bustlers at Hildersham, the Reyneses and Borards at Clifton Reynes, the St. Clares at Danbury, the Westons at Weston-under-Lizard, the De Horkesleys at Horkesley, the Achards at Sparsholt, the poor pickled ecclesiastic at Derby, and many others. Each would contribute something of corroboration or of strengthening to this particular art record, but too much lengthen the present account to be treated of in detail here.

During the last fifty years the shameful scourge of ‘restoration’—which the world woke

up forty years too late to fight against—has been but rarely extended to wooden effigies. They were tacitly consigned by their legal guardians to ruder but not more destructive hands than those of the professional ‘restorer.’ It may fairly be questioned whether a process which obliterates every vestige of the ancient decoration and—precisely as in the case of a church—sets up as ‘restoration’ a condition of things which never existed before, as in the lamentable gilding of the painted Purbeck effigy of King John at Worcester in 1873, is not more wickedly destructive than either oil-painting and sanding, scrubbing by the relentless parish clerk, the churchwarden’s dark shroud of whitewash, or even burning in the vestry fire.

ALBERT HARTSHORNE.

THE PICTURESQUE IN HOMER

II

THE similes of the ‘Odyssey’ are comparatively few. Two of them—a large proportion of the whole—are declared by Colonel Mure to be inappropriate:—

‘In the Odyssey, the comparison of Penelope circumvented by the wiles of the suitors to a lion hemmed in by a host of pursuers, is also somewhat startling. A gentler victim of the hunter’s snares were more appropriate. The otherwise strongly marked partiality of the poet for the lion as a source of figurative illustration is nowhere certainly more broadly exemplified.’

The lion of the comparison is not yet hemmed in, and in what respect Penelope may be most naturally compared to him will appear on consideration of the circumstances which lead up to the simile. Penelope has just been shocked by information of the faithful herald, Medon, that the suitors are no longer content with making her palace a scene of riot and gratuitous waste, but that they are prosecuting a plot to waylay and murder her son Telemachus, who, she hears for the first time, is away from Ithaca.

Around her a soul-wasting grief was diffused, nor longer endured she
To sit on a chair, of the many that were in the apartment,
But down on the threshold she sat of her well-built chamber,
Wailing piteously, and the servants mourned around her,
All, whether young or elder, as many as were in the household.—(716.)

The simile is suggestive of brooding on such other feelings and purposes towards the plotters against her as are natural, not to say excusable, in a mother against the intending murderers of a child, and indeed we find that her feelings in regard to them are as fierce as those of Ulysses himself (xvii. 194).

The lion, who sees the toils closing round him, is not to be supposed scrupulous as to any violence in an attempt to extricate himself:—

But Penelopeia, the prudent, there in her upper chamber
Was lying down fasting, and neither of food nor of drink was partaker,
Revolving whether her faultless son from death would escape free,
Or whether would be subdued by the suitors, overweening;
And, whatever a lion amidst a press of men has had thought of
In fear as to when they may draw the crafty circle round him,
Upon her all this revolving descended gentle slumber,
And sinking reclined she slept, and all her limbs relaxed were.

Another simile of the ‘Odyssey’ may more naturally excite surprise, if it does not truly justify cavil, as it certainly does not the particular objection of Colonel Mure.

In the last book but one, Ulysses, long disguised, gives to his wife—as yet holding off—the complete assurance of his identity by disclosing his knowledge of a secret token arranged between them from old time—